

Winter 2018

Winter 2018 - HIPS Newsletter

Department of History and Political Science

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Newsletter – Winter 2018

A Message from the Chair



Greetings,

This morning I met with a student in the department, and he shared his utter amazement that he has only one class left to take. “I can’t believe I’m almost done,” he said, looking as if he were in an episode of the Twilight Zone.

As another graduation season approaches, I am reminded that life operates in cycles. Every goal we ever set really consists mostly of the journey towards that goal. Once we achieve our objective, it’s on to our next conquest. How important it then is for us to make the best of the path leading us towards our ambitions since we spend most of our lives “on the way” somewhere. The moments when we are actually perched at the top of the mountain we just climbed are few before we head right back down and find another mountain to scale.

If you are graduating soon and ready to jump right into your new adventure, best wishes for a fulfilling journey wherever you choose to wander. If you are taking a break for the summer, have great fun!

DHPS Freshman Receives First Student Scholar Fund Award



David Rocha, a freshman student in the Department of History and Political Science, was the first recipient of the Student Scholar Fund. This award enabled Mr. Rocha to attend Pi Sigma Alpha's (the National Political Science Honor Society) National Student Research Conference hosted by the George Washington University in DC. Accompanying David was Ransford Edwards, Jr., Ph.D., DHPS faculty. David "had a blast" as he met individuals from all over the nation and had the opportunity to present a paper (captured in the photo to the right).



When the NSU Freshman was not enjoying the benefits of the conference, including networking opportunities, career panels covering topics such as graduate and law school, internships, and careers in various political science fields, he was seeing the sights and trying to keep up with his school work. Some of his leisure activities included brief tours of parts of the city, a "dinner in a ballroom that overlooked the Potomac and some surrounding sky scrapers" as well as a "last minute stop" to "check out the White House." For David Rocha, and the Department of History and Political Science it was a celebration of excellence and achievement.

Ransford Edwards reported that Mr. Rocha's presentation was excellent! Rocha says, "I definitely recommend this for any undergraduate student who wants to advance his/her education" (Article adapted from *Sharkbytes*, original article by Dr. Judith McKay).

Student Engagement

DHPS Winter Valentine's Day Party



On Wednesday, February 14th, students, faculty, staff and alumni were encouraged to come out and “share some DHPS love” at the Valentine’s Day lunch. This event had a large turnout, and gave student organizations in the department a chance to share information about their activities and display the diverse and passionate character of the department.

The event allowed many department students and faculty to share their experiences and give brief, informational overviews for their respective organizations. Dr. Honggang Yang, Dean of the College of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences, and Dr. Jon Garon, Dean of the Shepard Broad College of Law, as well as other staff members also showed support and said a few words at the event – encouraging student participation and engagement.



Mock Trial

Dr. Gary Gershman, Ph.D.



2017-2018 saw the NSU Mock Trial program grow and reach new heights. For the first time in history, NSU fielded two full teams. The lawyers and witnesses traveled far and wide to compete against other schools, including a one-day invitational in Tampa, a weekend competition in Minneapolis, Minnesota and a scrimmage against Palm Beach Atlantic College.

The culmination of the months of practice was the regional competition in Orlando, Florida (See picture on the left, taken in February). One of the teams had an excellent tournament going 4 and 4, just missing

advancing to the next round of competition. Next year will yield new competitions, hosting a scrimmage and hopefully getting into the next round of nationals.

The students who participated had nothing but positive remarks on their experiences. For example, Vivien Smatko (communications major), stated that, "Mock Trial became so much more than a team meeting...it became a lifestyle." She elaborated that, "Even after our last competition, team members and I still made inside jokes when we saw something that resembles evidence from the trial...Since I have joined Mock Trial, I found myself to be a better listener, to think more critically, and I have developed friendships that will last me a lifetime."



(Picture taken in January in Minneapolis).

Gabriella Lopez (legal studies major), echoed Vivien's sentiments: "Mock Trial was an amazing experience. Being able to work with peers towards a common goal was always fun, but our team had a way of finding the perfect balance between enjoying the experience while gaining knowledge. We as a team definitely had our ups and downs this season, but it was one of my favorite things to be involved in and left me with memories that will last a lifetime."

Kaitlyn Castro (political science major), shared her thoughts on the experiences: "Mock trial is definitely a rewarding experience. Yes, it can be tough, especially when competition is coming up...Even though there's a lot of learning involved, I promise it's fun. You create a special bond with your teammates and coach, such as jokes only Mock Trial members would understand...."

Genocide Trip – Bosnia, Croatia, Poland, Hungary, Serbia.

Dr. Gary Gershman, Ph.D.



The photo to the left shows Dr. Gary Gershman's *Genocide in the 20th Century and Beyond* (HIST 4700) class eagerly awaiting their adventures at the Atlanta International Airport.

The class (HIST 4700) is described as a unique experience that enables

students to learn history beyond the classroom. Besides sixteen weeks of reading, writing, discussions and debating, the class includes a two-week trip (over spring break) to Poland, Hungary, Serbia and Bosnia. There are visits to Krakow, Budapest, Belgrade and Sarajevo. The trip allows students to dig deeper into the subject matter with visits to sites like Auschwitz-Birkenau and Srebrenica. Students also spend time checking out old Olympic sites in Sarajevo, exploring the streets and street food of Belgrade, eating a ton of pierogis in Poland, and touring the Paris of the East – Budapest. This is a class students never forget, and it changes them in a way they never expected.



Macy Rodrick, a biology major, says she “learned more in this class than any other at NSU. The trip opened my eyes to what’s beyond our little ‘safe haven’ of a country and that there is so much more to this world than what we limit ourselves to. I have always been a proponent of learning through traveling, and this class/trip is a prime example of that. This trip has left me wanting more; more travel, more experiences, and more knowledge about our world. It is not about saying that you went to all of these different countries, but more about the people you met, the memories you made, and the lessons you learned.”

Another student, Zoe Stein, a legal studies major, shared her thoughts by echoing Macy’s ideas. “The trip has opened my eyes to so much more of the world than what I could have ever learned just in a classroom. Being able to interact directly with these cultures has been one the best gifts ... Going on the trip has made me question everything I thought previously and I see change coming up in my future because of it.”



Kaitlyn Casto, a political science major, explains that she had been living in a bubble before this trip. “When you’ve lived in South Florida your whole life, this trip changes your perspective on so many levels. The trip was about past genocides so the constant theme was human rights, global politics, and international relations. Experiences like visiting Auschwitz or listening to the stories of Bosnian genocide survivors have had a tremendous impact. As a

political science major, I’ve always had interest in the international community. But now that I’ve been on this trip, I want to do something that brings good change to the world. Before the trip, I was looking into a Master’s in National Security. Now, after the trip, I’m looking into a Master’s in International Studies. Seeing the aftermath of genocide first-hand made me realize how disgusting the world can be. If there’s anything I can do to deter terrible atrocities, then I want to be a part of that.”



Vivien Smatko, a communications major, said she “came back to America as a changed individual.” She “now realizes the importance of caring and being educated in the realm of humanity. This class made me think more than ever before and I encourage you to take this class. Enlighten yourself about the unthinkable and be prepared to have your mind and life altered forever.”



Model United Nations

By G. Nelson Bass III, J.D., Ph.D.



The Nova International Relations Association (NIRA) which serves as the Model UN team for NSU is wrapping up one of its best and most productive years. On April 12th it headed to Charlotte for the 2018 Southern Regional Model United Nations Conference (SRMUN). This was the team's sixth year attending SRMUN. Traveling with the team were Varsha Gopaulchan, Patrick Pyott, Joshua Hallinger, Esperanza Bautista-Ulerio, Emily Gilman, Celina Mahabir, Afrin Naz, Haley Tract, and Leydi Diana

Arboleda Mocarro. At SRMUN we represented Turkey and Ukraine.

This year we were also fortunate enough to attend our first ever Harvard Model United Nations Conference (HNMUN) in Boston, from Feb. 15th – 18th, 2018. This was an amazing opportunity for the team, as there were some 3,000+ delegates from 69 different countries in attendance. Representing Haiti from NSU were Celina Mahabir, Joshua Hallinger, Varsha Gopaulchan, Ian Michael Andrews, Emily Gilman, Esperanza Bautista-Ulerio, and Patrick Pyott.

In addition to this, we traveled to Gainesville in October for the 12th Annual Florida Model UN Conference, and held our 5th Annual NIRA High School MUN Conference here in the law school in early November. This conference brought over 100 local area high school students from five different high schools to the NSU campus.



In short, it has been an incredibly busy year, but the team is extremely grateful for all of the support shown by the department for our endeavors! The DHPS Winter 2018 Newsletter salutes these outstanding achievements.



Dr. McNaron, Faculty Member Retires



Dr. David McNaron, after 33 years of “remarkable service at NSU,” has announced his retirement from DHPS, at the end of this academic year. In the picture to the left, Dr. McNaron posed in front of one of the now empty bookshelves in his office, and the image serves not only as a physical representation of the emptiness the department will feel with his departure, but a reminder of the immense knowledge and dedication that he has so generously given to the NSU community.

Dr. McNaron began his career at NSU in 1985 as the first faculty coordinator for the Bachelor of Professional Management. A couple of years later, in 1987, he moved into full-time teaching when the Department of Liberal Arts was created. Over the decades, McNaron has been instrumental in developing curricula for several academic programs (such as the legal studies major and the philosophy

major).

Dr. McNaron has also been very involved throughout the years in academic endeavors. He was a participant in three National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminars and Institutes. He has published several book chapters, articles and even a number of works of poetry. In 2010 he brought the Florida Philosophical Association Annual Conference to NSU and coordinated the event. His commitment to excellence, professionalism and dedication has been valuable to the NSU community.

The DHPS faculty joins Dr. Honggang Yang (Dean of CAHSS), and the overall NSU community in wishing Dr. McNaron the very best as he enters a new stage of his life!

‘Fantastical Imagery and Elements of Resilience in the Caribbean’: Presented by Dr. Andrea Shaw Nevins



NSU’s College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences introduced Dr. Andrea Shaw Nevins, the DHPS Chair, and Interim Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs for the College, as their latest speaker in the Intellectual Conversations series. Intellectual Conversations, is based on the former Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences’ Faculty Lecture Series. The presentation took place on February 12, from noon to 1:00 pm, in room 2056 of the DeSantis Building. The speech was titled “Fantastical Imagery and Elements of

Resilience in the Caribbean” and focused on the fantastical folklore and art from the Caribbean, fitting in with CAHSS’s 2017-2018 theme, “Resistance.”

From slave revolts to resisting oppression, the presentation will span over the diverse history and rich culture of the region. One specific artist that will be showcased is Asser Saint Val, an artist from Haiti. Saint Val’s featured art focuses on being confronted with racism in the various forms in which it is presented (Rinka, *The Current*, February 6, 2018)(

<https://nsucurrent.nova.edu/andrea-shaw-nevins-presents-fantastical-imagery-and-elements-of-resilience-in-the-caribbean/>).

The Law, Culture and Humanities Conference, Georgetown Law School

Natural Mothers: The Rhetoric of Abortion Law

Dr. Vicki Toscano



The Department of History and Political Science’s own Dr. Vicki Toscano delivered a paper at the Law, Culture and Humanities Conference held at Georgetown Law School in March 2018. Her talk, titled: *Natural Mothers: The Rhetoric of Abortion Law*, examined the connection between cultural beliefs about women’s nature as mother and constitutional law in the U.S.

She demonstrated in her talk, that historical acceptance of an essentialized gender identity for woman as mother was utilized by anti-abortion forces to argue that abortion must harm women, even when safe and legal, because it disrupts women’s nature. She explained that this belief formed the heart of a 2007 Supreme Court case, *Gonzales v. Carhart*, where the Supreme Court allowed a regulation on abortion to stand.

This was partly because judges accepted the claim that this regulation protected women from psychological harm from their own choice to abort, without any empirical evidence of this harm. Dr. Toscano concluded that it is only in refuting this woman-protective rationale for abortion regulations that a better path forward for laws touching on abortion and reproduction may be found. DHPS congratulates Dr. Toscano for her achievement and looks forward to celebrating further achievements in the future!

The Busy Life of an NSU Alum:

Cleveland Ferguson, III



Mr. Cleveland Ferguson III earned his bachelor's degree at Nova Southeastern University in legal studies, a major now found in the Department of History and Political Science. He went on from NSU to earn his law degree at the Florida State University College of Law. At FSU he flourished, becoming research editor of the *Journal of Land Use & Environmental Law*, a Public Service Fellow, as well as a Florida Bar Foundation Scholar.

After law school, Mr. Ferguson, became a government lawyer and then entered private practice. Thereafter, he taught law for many years, and he became the first African American to receive both the honor of full professor at Florida Coastal School of Law and tenure, conferred by the Board of Directors. Mr. Ferguson is widely published in the fields of constitutional, commercial and international law.

He has served as editor of the Human Rights Section of *The International Lawyer*, the *American & Caribbean Law Initiative Journal*, and is currently the 11th permanent editor of *The Kappa Alpha Psi Journal*. His textbook, *A Practical Approach to Florida Constitutional Law*, will be published in 2019.

Mr. Ferguson has a distinguished record of board service in nonprofit, legal, and international associations, holding leadership roles with the Florida Bar, the Florida Bar Foundation and the American Bar Association Section of International Law. He is a member of Leadership Broward Class XXIII, Leadership Jacksonville (2010), and Leadership Florida Class XXXIII.

Currently, Cleveland is senior vice president and chief administrative officer at the Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA). Mr. Cleveland Ferguson III is an excellent alumnus and representative of Nova Southeastern University, and he provides a strong testimony to the importance of long-term personal and professional development.

Stephen Levitt meets with NSU alumnus in University Center



On February 20th, Stephen Levitt, a faculty member of the department, met Johnathon Lenett, an NSU alumnus, in the hallway of the University Center. Johnathon was in Florida for a few days visiting relatives and friends and stopped by NSU.

Johnathon told Stephen Levitt the following: "I am living in Beijing, China. There are so many aspects of my life that I enjoy. The most important is that I can give back to Chinese society by teaching English. It's a remarkable experience."



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